



TITLE:

Cover, Contents, Instructions of Authors

AUTHOR(S):

CITATION:

Cover, Contents, Instructions of Authors. SANSAL : An Environmental Journal for the Global Community 2011, 5

ISSUE DATE:

2011-04-12

URL:

<http://hdl.handle.net/2433/143602>

RIGHT:

S A N S A I

An Environmental Journal for the Global Community

No.5 April 2011

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Sansai is published annually by Sansai Gakurin (The Grove of Universal Learning) in collaboration with the Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto University. Sansai Gakurin was established in April 2002 to support the research and educational activities of Kyoto University's Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies. "Sansai" refers to the traditional East Asian triad of heaven, earth and humanity that embraces the phenomenal world. "Gakurin" means a grove of scholars. Sansai Gakurin proposes, through research and learning, to foster the ideal of a global civilisation based upon the premises of environmental stability and life-fulfilment for all creatures. *Sansai* provides an international intellectual forum for Japanese and overseas environmental specialists working in the sciences, humanities, industry, governmental and non-governmental organisations. The journal is written in easily accessible English and aims to transcend the linguistic barriers that exist between disciplines and nations: barriers that impede the development of truly global environmental studies.

Contents

Foreword	iii
“Whose Earth is it?”	vii
<i>High Moon (Hiroshi Takatsuki)</i>	
Voices	
The 2010 International Cosmos Prize commemorative lecture: keeping the land alive and well	3
<i>Estella B. Leopold</i> <i>With an introduction by Kazuo Matsushita</i>	
Research papers	
Community-based adaptation to climate change: the concept, challenges and way forward	21
<i>Takaaki Miyaguchi</i>	
The emergence of persistent organic pollutants in the environment: the occurrence and treatment of perfluorinated compounds	37
<i>Chinagarn Kunacheva, S.T.M.L.D. Senevirathna, Shuhei Tanaka, Shigeo Fujii, Nguyen Pham Hong Lien, Munehiro Nozoe and Binaya Raj Shivakoti</i>	
SOS: save our swamps for peat’s sake	51
<i>Jason Hon</i>	
Current projects and initiatives	
Sustainable agriculture: the lessons from history	69
<i>Yoichiro Sato, Leo Aoi Hosoya, Emi Kimura, Takashi Kurata, Chiaki Muto and Katsunori Tanaka</i>	
Perspectives	
Introducing the probiotics principle: converting organic waste into natural fertilizer in Japan	85
<i>Saburo Matsui</i>	
Dispatches	
Negotiating biodiversity: COP 10’s (modest) attempt to save life on Earth	99
<i>Jane Singer</i>	
Cancun saved the process, not the planet	123
<i>Sarah Marchildon</i>	
Afterword	
Memories of Dr Carmen Blacker OBE, FBA (1924–2009)	131
<i>Toshio Yokoyama</i>	
Instructions for authors	135

Foreword

The United Nations proclaimed 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity, billing it as a unique opportunity to increase understanding of the vital role biodiversity plays in sustaining life on our planet. International efforts to safeguard biodiversity systems and habitats climaxed with the Convention for Biodiversity 10th Conference of the Parties (COP 10), which ran from 18 to 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan. *Sansai* No. 5 continues the debate, with three papers that consider different aspects of the global struggle to preserve biodiversity.

The first comes from Dr Estella Leopold, emeritus professor of the University of Washington, USA, and recipient of the 2010 International Cosmos Prize. This accolade is awarded annually to individuals whose research and work are recognized as contributing to a significant understanding of the relationships among living organisms, the interdependence of life and the global environment. Transcribed from a commemorative lecture given at the Shiran Kaikan, Kyoto University, on 11 October 2010, this paper celebrates the power and energy of those US citizens who are lobbying for the protection of nature and biodiversity. Aptly, this speech about people's voices launches the Voices section of this journal, a new section that *Sansai's* editors hope will provide a forum for key thinkers and doers in the environmental movement.

The theme of biodiversity is pursued in two more pieces that appear in different sections of the journal. A paper from Mr Jason Hon, a PhD candidate at the Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies (GSGES), Kyoto University, addresses the critical ecological state of Malaysia's peat swamp forests, which are rapidly disappearing as the Malaysian government rushes to increase palm oil production in response to rocketing world demand. Then, Associate Professor Jane Singer, also of GSGES, combines analysis and commentary with an incisive and often humorous insider's perspective on the COP 10 meeting held at Nagoya last October.

All three of these papers show us why biodiversity is important and how it is at risk. They are joined by two more contributions, which add insight to the biodiversity debate in unique ways. First, a cartoon from Professor Takatsuki Hiroshi (pen name High Moon), emeritus of Kyoto University, queries the assumption that it is our right as human beings to possess, plunder and squabble over the Earth. He suggests that we are no more than equal members of a planetary community in which all species must co-exist rather than try to conquer one another. Next, a moving tribute to Dr Carmen Blacker, renowned scholar of Japanese culture, religion and folklore, from my co-editor, Professor Toshio Yokoyama (Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University), reminds us that while the dwindling diversity of plant and animal species is of pressing concern, the passing of cultural diversity, along with those who celebrate it, is

something that all of us should mourn.

Sansai's remaining papers address a variety of other concerns. One paper is co-authored by a team of six engineering scientists (main author Dr Chinagarn Kunacheva, GSGES), most of whom are based at Kyoto University. It examines the emerging problem of persistent organic pollutants in our water supply. Two papers address the issue of sustainable agriculture. The first is a field report by a project research team (main author Professor Yoichiro Sato) from the Research Institute of Humanity and Nature in the north of Kyoto city. It introduces us to the distant and compromised historical agricultural practices observed at field sites in Japan and China and speculates on the future of sustainable agriculture. The second is a Perspectives piece by Emeritus Professor Saburo Matsui, who advocates the production of probiotic compost made from recycled organic waste for use in sustainable farming practices.

Finally, two papers highlight what is arguably the most pressing environmental issue of our time: climate change. The first full paper to appear in this issue of *Sansai* comes from Dr Takaaki Miyaguchi, coordinator of the United Nations Volunteer Programme in Bonn, Germany. This paper highlights the efforts of vulnerable communities to prepare for the impacts — some already being experienced, others likely to occur — of climate change. Conversely, the last article featured in this issue calls for climate change-related efforts to be made at the other end of the scale, at the international level, where governments must act now to empower local authorities and communities to reduce emissions and curb climate change. This piece on the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in December 2010 in Cancun, Mexico (COP 16), comes from Ms Sarah Marchildon, a master's student at GSGES, and complements Jane Singer's piece on COP 10 in Nagoya. GSGES currently has two former journalists within its ranks — Marchildon being one and Singer the other. Together, their timely reports from the front line of international negotiations on biodiversity and climate change launch Dispatches, another section published for the first time in *Sansai* No. 5.

The new Voices and Dispatches sections increase the journal's capacity to reach beyond academia without compromising academic standards. *Sansai* set out five years ago to break down the disciplinary barriers that sometimes impede the development of global environmental studies. It aims to present an international intellectual forum for individuals working on environmental issues in non-governmental organizations, government and industry as well as academia. These new sections help the journal to meet this admittedly ambitious goal and are part of *Sansai*'s ongoing efforts to be more inclusive, not just in terms of how it talks about issues but in who gets to do the talking. *Sansai*'s editors hope you will enjoy the conversation and be willing to take part. It is in this spirit that we would like to direct all our readers to the Instructions for Authors

supplied at the back of this issue and accessible online at <http://repository.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/dspace/bulletin/sansai>.

3 March 2011

Tracey Gannon (PhD)
Editor-in-chief, *Sansai*
Sansai Gakurin
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Kyoto University

Voices

Research papers

Current projects and initiatives

Perspectives

Dispatches

Instructions for authors

Submission of papers

Sansai publishes original research papers not normally exceeding 10,000 words, inclusive of notes and references, on any branch of global environmental studies. The journal also welcomes the submission of project reports, research notes, shorter essays introducing research perspectives, letters to the editors and book reviews. All submissions should be written in a way that is accessible to a broad readership.

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The submission of a paper to *Sansai*'s full paper, project report or perspectives sections implies that it has not been published previously and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Manuscripts under consideration for publication in these sections will be reviewed by at least two reviewers, chosen by the editorial board of *Sansai*. Authors may be requested to revise conditionally accepted manuscripts within eight weeks of the receipt of reviews. The final decision to approve or reject manuscripts for publication will be made by the editorial board of *Sansai*.

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Manuscripts should be written in English and double spaced on A4 paper. Authors may use British or American spelling as long as their use is consistent. Contributors for whom English is a second language are encouraged to have their papers read by a native English speaker to avoid ambiguity of meaning. Notes should be identified with

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1. A title page, including the title, the first and last names of authors and their affiliations, any sources of support in the form of funding or grants, a list of up to five keywords or key concepts for the reader's reference and an abstract of no more than 250 words.
2. The main body of the text.
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Journals: Kelly, Michael J. (1997) 'Overcoming Obstacles to the Effective Implementation of International Environmental Agreements', *Georgetown International Environmental Law Review* 9, No. 2: 447–488.

Proceedings: Woese, Carl R. (2002) 'On the evolution of cells' in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 99 (13): 8472–7.

Electronic sources: UN (1992) 'Chapter 26 [Agenda 21]: Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training'. Available at <www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter36.htm> [Accessed 8 February 2006]

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Cover design by Hirohide Kobayashi, associate professor of the Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto University. The title, *Sansai*, incorporates letters modelled on typefaces used in the first edition of Dr Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) — a landmark in the history of language development. The four Chinese characters that appear on the back cover are a photographic reproduction of the wooden gate-plate of Sansai Gakurin. They were written by the sinologist Dr Ichiro Kominami, emeritus professor of Kyoto University, in the style of late 2nd century stone inscriptions of the Confucian classics that stood in the forecourt of the Grand School of Luoyang, the capital of the late Han dynasty.

三才 第五冊

編者 横山俊夫、ガノン・トレイシー

2011 年 4 月 5 日印刷

2011 年 4 月 12 日発行 非売品

発行所 京都大学大学院地球環境学堂
三才学林
京都市左京区吉田本町

印刷所 明文舎印刷株式会社
京都市南区吉祥院池ノ内町 10

***Sansai*: No.5 April 2011**

Edited by Tracey Gannon & Toshio Yokoyama

Published by Sansai Gakurin, Kyoto University
Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies
Yoshida Honmachi, Kyoto, Japan

Printed and bound in Japan by Meibunsha Ltd.

ISSN 1349-872X
© 2011 Sansai Gakurin



SANSAI GAKURIN